1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

174. Among the Iban the women are much more conservative than the men, for their lack of contact with the non-Iban world causes them to cling to customary usages more tenaciously than do the widely travelled and more sophisticated men. Moreover, because of the utrolateral structure of the Iban *bilek* family, women exercise considerable influence, and this is undoubtedly a factor of major importance in producing the marked stability of culture and social custom which characterizes Iban tribes of the interior.

175. All Iban women, with the exception of those incapacitated by old age or sickness, participate year by year in the arduous routine of farm work. While the young men gad off on their journeys, their sisters stay at home to sow, weed and reap. It is upon the women of a *bilek* family that the main effort of *padi* cultivation falls, and in particular, the responsibility of selecting, processing and storing seed; deciding upon the planting order of the farm; and looking after the charms (*pengaroh*) and magical plants (*sengkenyang*) associated with *padi* rituals. In many families the women have a much firmer grasp of the traditional rites of sowing and reaping than do the men. This state of affairs is largely the outcome of the custom of *bejalai*, for not until he is about 35 years of age does the average man settle down to managing a farm, by which time his wife, even if she is five years his junior, has about fifteen years' experience of the routine of *padi* cultivation. At Rumah Nyala, on 6th March, 1950, I attended the *nganjong ka penyadai* ritual (cf. Para. 140) of Dumo's *bilek* family (No. 2). Among those present was Dumo's son Ngi, aged 34 years and newly responsible for running the farm; it was the first time he had ever witnessed this important harvesting rite.

176. In general, the division of labour between the sexes is as follows:

Table 10: *Division of Labour*

Males	Females
Main Routine of Padi Cultivation	
nebas .. slashing of undergrowth	*nebas* .. slashing of undergrowth
nebang .. felling of the jungle	
ngeredak .. cutting away branches of fallen trees	
nunu uma firing of the farm	
ngebak .. clearing away of branches, debris, etc. in the event of a bad burn	*ngebak* .. clearing away of branches, debris, etc. in the event of a bad burn
nugal .. dibbling	*menih* .. sowing
building of *langkau*, or farm hut	*mantun* .. weeding
erection of fences (*pagar*)	
making of traps (*peti*, *bubong*, etc.)	
making of aeolian alarms, etc.	
guarding of the farm, especially at night	guarding of the farm, especially during the day
	ngetau .. reaping
berangkut .. the carrying in of the *padi*	*muntih* .. selecting of seed, and its subsequent care
mungko .. threshing	*ngeruman* .. separating of grain from straw
	berayar, and *muput* .. initial winnowing by fanning
	muput .. winnowing by hand trays (*chapan*)
	guarding of *padi* while it is being sunned
besimpan .. storing of *padi* in bins (*tibang*)	*besimpan* .. placing of *padi* in baskets (*baka*) ready for storing

11:Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1957 OC6 Iban OC6

that had to be observed during the whole of the time that the pots were being made—from the first gathering of the clay to the completion of firing. It was vitally important, she said, that all persons having anything to do with the making of the pots should at no stage, when they were handling or dealing with the clay or the partially made pots, emit wind.

Such prohibitions as this are called by the Iban *pemali*, and this particular prohibition against the emission of wind (*pemali kentuat*), like many other Iban *pemali*, is an instance of homoeopathic magic. In the judgement of the Iban there is a clearly recognizable similarity between the noise that a person makes when emitting wind and the noise that a pot makes when it bursts in the course of firing. Further, the Iban believe that if someone engaged in the making of pots should happen, while so doing, to emit wind—even though involuntarily—that this occurrence is liable to result in the bursting of one or more of the pots when, later, they come to be fired. In short, the logic of the belief is (as Sir James Fraser has phrased it) "that like produces like, or that an effect resembles its cause."[7]

Among the Iban there are very many such magical prohibitions, and they are associated with virtually every kind of important ritual or economic activity. Furthermore, many *pemali* are so widely known and so firmly established that they can be said to be part of Iban custom, or *adat*, and there are some *pemali* the transgression of which involves a stipulated form of expiation (i.e. by the sacrifice of a fowl or pig) and the payment of a fine to the persons whose interests have been affected. In the case of the prohibition under discussion however, there was no such specific penalty, and no one we asked had heard of action being taken against anyone because of its violation. It was a rule of conduct which everyone—apparently—obeyed.

The seam of clay that Demai had selected was narrow and uneven. As she worked she examined each handful with care. She was primarily interested in making an estimate of the plasticity of the clay she was collecting, and so each piece as she gathered it was fingered for a few moments to ensure that it was sufficiently *liat* (plastic). Any clay that did not reach the standard she had set was at once rejected. As Demai's standards were exacting and the seam of clay poor (much of it being intermixed

2. Value of New Land

175 166 183 [484] [501] Implicit in the population pressures was a second factor, the obverse of the first, the Iban cultural value of new land. The Ibans are themost expansive and aggressive of the indigenous peoples of Sarawak. The institution of pejalai included, among other purposes such as the validation of the Iban male, the reconnitering of new lands and other people. In one account,[11] two brothers, Baji and Tagi', sons of Baring, on a pejalai from the Skrang, made a bark canoe (utap),[12] and travelled down the Kanowit. Coming out onto the broad expanse of the Rejang, they were astounded to find how flat the land was. They travelled as far as Bukit Lan below Sibu, then returned to bring their families to the land just waiting for the taking.

3. The Pioneer

175 166 554 [184] [423] A third factor, related to the migrations and high value of new land in Iban culture, was the traditional class system. More will be said of this ina a later chapter, but contrary to what Freeman has written about the Ibans of the Sut, the Ibans in the Sibu District had a well-developed class consciousness, which still obtains among them, particularly in the arrangement of marriages. During the nineteenth century, the pioneer (ke mubok menoa baru, "who opens up new land")

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[115] [11]Interview with Tuai Rumah Ampan, 16 November, 1970.

[12]Such craft are still occasionally made for trips from headwaters, and abandoned after a single trip.

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648 Ibans were involved in a contest for the land. This does not imply that other land was not available, but that the other groups often hunted and gathered in areas that the Ibans found desirous for rice cultivation. With some people, for example, the Bukitans, the Ibans formed alliances, the Bukitans serving as guides to Ibans in new territories and eventually adopting rice cultivation and the longhouse
[727] organization from the Ibans (Freeman 1955-14-15). Other groups either were driven out by the Ibans, as in the case of the Melanaus, Punans, Ukits, Kayans and Sians (SG No. 288, 1890-13, 151, 194; 1904 No. 466, 211; 1919 No. 765, March 17; 1920, No. 798, 175), or were captured as ulun berani ("slaves of braves") and thereby assimilated in the lowest class of Iban society.

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183 Headhunting was an integral part of the Iban grammar of values, as Sandin makes abundantly clear in his discussion of the Gawai Antu ("Feast of the Departed Spirits," SMJ 1963-321-326). In a Gawai Antu observed by this author, the climax of the three-day celebration, costing an estimated M$30,000, came when two old braves who had taken human heads (ke bedengah) drank the sacred rice-wine (ai garong). Only two men were eligible to drink the ai garong at that feast, for they must have taken a human head. These men were accorded places of honor and
000 their deeds recounted in song. Since the termination of headhunting

5. "Big Men" among "big men"

A fifth factor contributing to the Iban migrations of the nineteenth century, one which must necessarily be discussed in some detail, was a deep resentment of the Brookes' paternalism and interference with traditional ways of life. The Ibans were oriented to a high degree of mobility and independence, and reacted to the invasions of their lives by an authoritarian government with the time-honored reactions of fight and flight. Iban society has always been (and is) highly factionalized, and the leadership patterns show numerous parallels with the "big man" complex of Melanesia, as will be discussed below.

Adapting as they did to an environment of relatively limited productivity in which they had to move every five or six years, the Ibans placed a premium on the achievements of the individual, especially the male: pejalai, pioneering, headhunting, success in farming, and tattooing (an ordeal in design to see whether a man could withstand physical pain),[17] among others.

We have mentioned the autonomy and independence of the bilik family, which produced and consumed its own food. On this point,

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[17] Several Iban men explaining why they were untattooed stated quite unashamedly that they couldn't stand the pain. Tattooing is done with five needles tied together, the points dipped in soot and driven under the skin. It is a rapidly disappearing form of art and type of ordeal.

175 555 624 activity as a brave warrior and advance guard (buloh balang), and, after building up a following, an outstanding career as a war leader. Lintong (war-name, Mpa Hari, "Cloud" or "Face of the Day"), was recognized as raja berani, as was the late Pengulu Gani Apai Engkamat of Bawang Assan.[18] The descendants of these men still enjoy prestige and deference as offspring of raja berani.

[171] The status of the raja berani parallels in several respects that of the Melanesian "big man."[19] Like the "big man," the raja [193] berani was verbally persuasive. Fluency and cleverness of speech [157] (landik bejako') are valued among the Ibans, and every successful leader at whatever level is an able speaker. Though a man may possess other admirable qualities and enjoy success in farming or business, if he cannot speak convincingly, any aspirations he may have for leadership are likely to go unrewarded.[20]

[157] Again, as with the "big man," the raja berani were highly competitive. There is both resistance to any appearance of submission and reluctance to the surrender of his independence on the part of the

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[18] Pengulu Gani's obituray appeared in the local papers, and in such foreign papers as the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette when he died in 1959.

[19] The modern Iban counterpart is the local politican.

[20] In longhouses where the tuai rumah is a poor speaker, a deputy (mandai) who is an able speaker represents him in welcoming guests and in helping to handle disputes.

them, and in the interplay that has taken place in the past three-quarters of a century, their adaptation and orientation has changed in response to the developing town. From a people who were characterized by their independence, the Ibans of the Sibu District still maintain the value of independence as a cultural norm or ideal, but in fact are markedly dependent upon Sibu as an administrative center for the legitimization of their activities and investments, and as a center of trade for the goods they produced and others they need. The rise and development of Sibu has had widely ramifying effects both structurally and culturally in Iban society, as will be discussed below.

1. Expansion of Brooke Rule

Sibu owes its existence to the expansion of Brooke rule, Iban migrations and headhunting, and the Rajah's policy of constructing forts during the nineteenth century. Like many of Sarawak's other towns, Sibu was built where no permanent settlement had existed previously. Chinese traders were attracted to the protection of the fort and, typical of other Sarawak towns, Sibu became a center of the expanding local administration and trade.

In 1845, two events prompted the Rajah to visit the Rajang for the first time. Early in that year, a group Melanau spokesmen visited Kuching, complained about Iban headhunting, and asked for protection.

000 If we may speak of a mercantile mentality, this quite literally is the ethos of the business community of Sibu. A majority of ties within individual networks, both formal and informal, are based upon expectations of trade and exchange, profit and gain. Philanthropic activities and the patronage of various sporting events draws attention to the sponsors - as well as to the trades they represent.

177 439 441 Although Ibans and other indigenes have shared in Sibu's growth in ways already described, viz. through supplying jungle products, rubber, pepper, and labor, few of them have owned shophouses and run businesses in the pasar. Notable exceptions include Messrs. Unchat anak Chok and Jonathan Bangau, each of whom inherited a shophouse from his father.[40] Both men have appreciated a considerable and steady income from the rental of their shops. "Pasar Bangau" has been a point of reference among Ibans in giving directions in Sibu. Bangau also is involved in several business enterprises, including serving as chairman of the Glass Sand Company, Limited, which supplies sand for a Japanese firm, and has an authorized capital of one million Malaysian dollars.

441 177 183 369 Of more immediate affect upon the Iban community has been the dissemination of those values concomitant with the mercantile mentality

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[40] Chok, the late father of Unchat, was a close friend of the father of Mr. Wong Soon Kai, a distinguished Sibu surgeon, and was advised in his investments by the elder Wong. It is significant that the fathers of Unchat and Bangau were among those Iban who refused to cut their rubber trees when the conflict between traditional rice cultivation and the new rubber planting gave rise to the story of rubber eating rice (cf. page 27).

[247]

of the business community of Sibu. Acceptance of the values of cash-income, profits and saving has motivated hundreds of Ibans to forsake home and farm for town and salary. Although many are wage-earners, few indeed have been able to penetrate the tightly woven fabric of the Foochow-dominated business world, and it appears doubtful that many will for some time to come. The only apparent break-through has been in retailing fruit, vegetables and, occasionally, poultry in the Iban market or in some other unoccupied public space, appreciating by the direct sale a much better return than by selling their goods to a Chinese middle-man.[41]

In the rural area, scores of Iban traders have emerged in the past two decades, running shophouses near their longhouse communities. In some instances, these are new businesses where none previously has existed. In other cases, business which formerly was handled by a Chinese trader has been taken over by Iban shopkeepers. For example, in 1971, a Chinese shopkeeper in the Ulu Salim Kiba area was forced to close his business when he could not collect outstanding debts. Upon his closing, all of his business fell to two Iban shopkeepers at Rumah Imba and Rumah Nyelang.

D. Services, Education, Recruitment and Recreation

The growth of Sibu as an administrative center and an entrepot was accompanied by the development of a number of other functions which

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[41] Middlemen and hawkers commonly pay Chinese gardeners and Ibans about one-half of the retail price for vegetables and fruit.

464 employment. In the opinion of many young people, there is no future for them in the longhouse, and in the minds of older members of the society, cash income is synonymous with work (kerja). Of the population of Rumah Nyala, Sungai Aup, fifty-five of the members are wage-earners, either commuting daily into Sibu, or away for months or even years at their jobs. Of the aggregation of seven longhouses in Bawang Assan below Sibu, more than three hundred of the community members are salaried.

183 Classification of the Iban as a people of a subsistence economy is dubious. For they have been a people who have maintained a cultural norm of achievement through production and in predation. As in many other societies, some members have achieved according to the ideal, others have fallen short.

179 The contacts over the past century with members of ethnic groups, especially Chinese and Malays, have been influential in effecting changes in traditional Iban adaptation. Further, the growth of the pasar as a center of administrative, commercial, service and recreational activities has resulted in a new orientation and new expectations among the Iban.

[182] The Ibans of this District no longer can be categorized in their adaptation as "rice cultivators," for they have responded to the numbers of opportunities in almost as many ways, so that the economic organization of the Ibans is already highly diversified and promises to be increasingly more so.

186 Anyau said, Mula ia aku nakai berau China asai ka mutah ("The first time
243 I ate Chinese rice, I felt like vomiting"). The man who is lucky enough
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[829] to grow enough rice so that he never is without and never has to buy is clearly considered a cut above the man who is not so successful.

243 That rice farming is not merely an economic activity but also
183 a ritual of powerful tradition is abundantly apparent in the cases of men and women who farm at a loss, not because they have to, but because it "is the way of our ancestors" (endang jalai aki ini kami bansa Iban). Unbing owns a wooden, Chinese carpenter-built house at the Tenth Mile Oya Road. In 1969-70, he returned to the area of his longhouse at Sungai Pa to grow rice, even though he is largely self-sufficient in terms of his needs. According to reckoning of the expenses he put out in travel, seed, labor and fertilizer, and the rice he harvested, he lost an estimated M$50 on the farming venture. Asked why he farmed at a loss, when otherwise he is an astute businessman, Unbing's answer was essentially that given above, and repeated by many Ibans: Endang jalai pengidup kami bansa Iban.

2. The Farming Year

243 The beginning of the farming year is set by the annual meeting
621 called by the tuai rumah of all the tuai bilik in his house, for the
[221] purpose of discussing where each family will farm during the next year. This permits the families involved to state where they will farm, and to

592 591 Malaysia in Limbang, and has moved there with financial assistance from Ganai and Sana. Thus, while Asun and Gaon still are recognized as members of Ganai's bilik, as technically are Sana and Sindong by the former's agreement with Ganai, in fact only Ganai and Nunsong are living in Bilik No. 5. Thus, within the past ten years, the composition of Ganai's bilik has changed from three - to two - generations, reckoning Asun and Gaon as members.

In the genealogical composition for Rumah Imba, Nyelang and Gaong, as in the larger sample, a majority of the families are comprised of nuclear of stem families.[5] Although no instances of married siblings with adult children living together as members of the same bilik-family were encountered in the sample, two cases were found, one in Majau, the other in Rumah Councillor Ranggar, Rantau Dilang. But these two situations were so rare and atypical to raise the comment,

> "(That is a)very unusual family. Most of us simply couldn't get along well enough to live as they do." (Nyelai' amat sida' nya'. Kami mayoh enda' ulih begulai baka sida' ia, Bangau Arping, 17.3.71).

592 591 178 183 A significant development in recent years has been the tendency away from one of the cardinal rules of social organization, viz. the presence of at least one child in the natal bilik to look after the parents

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 256]

[5] Rumah Imba, Nyelang, and Gaong were not included in Table 18 because no data were available for the years 1960 and 1966.

592 591 178 183 in their old age. As Freeman describes this principle,

> ". . .at least one of the children of a family, when he or she reaches maturity and marries, always remains in the parents bilik. All the other children may marry out and so become members of other units, but one always stays in the natal bilik."

While this rule remains culturally normative, in fact a number of instances may be adduced to indicate that it is not followed; for example, the family situations of Mayah and Ganai of Rumah Nyala. In both cases, the husbands agreed to uxorilocal residence (nguai ka indu')[6] but because the husbands of both were wage-earners, the rule of residence was waived in favor of the promise of financial help and the assumption of responsibility. The marriage of Vornica, Mayah's daughter, was so brief that this promise could not be realized. In the case of Sana and Sindong, Ganai supplies them with rice when he comes to town, and he lives with them in the Police Barracks while in town. When Asun moved to Limbang to take up his work, Ganai gave him his pocket money and Sana bought his brother-in-law's air ticket when the latter flew to Limbang to take up work.

592 591 178 183 434 The orientation to a cash economy has affected this residence rule, so that monthly remittance by wage-earning children or their spouses is as acceptable as physical presence and labor that may be contributed to

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[6] Nguai or ngugi means to take residence with wife's or husband's parents. Nguai ka indu' is uxorilocal, Nguai ka lelaki, virilocal residence.

592 the acquisition of food and marketable goods. At a general meeting of
591 the tuai rumah and tuai bilik shortly before Asun's departure for Limbang,
178 each man, beginning with the tuai rumah, spoke as eloquently as possible,
183 trying to impress upon Asun how much Ganai had spent on his support, food,
434 education and clothing.

> "Now, you are going to earn wages, so don't forget your parents who have supported you all your life" (Diatu' nuan deka' makai gaji. Anang enda' ingat ka aida apai indai ke udah melanja ka nuan.

Even if the move of children to Sibu or elsewhere for employment, leaves no one in the bilik to look after the parents, this often is preferable, even sought, if the children contribute financially towards the
[181] support of the parents. For the Iban is cash-conscious and cash-hungary, money always being inadequate to meet their demands and desires. With only 36 per cent of the Iban population self-sufficient in rice, a majority of the families must buy this staple for a period from a few weeks to half-a-year. The uncertain prices of rubber, pepper, ginger and other products makes wage-earning an attractive situation, both for the earner and his parents or in-laws whom he may be called on to help. Hence, the changing pattern in this cardinal rule of Iban postmarital residence.

591 The composition of the bilik-family fluctuates between the nuclear
592 family and the stem family in a majority of cases. There are a number of
178 reasons for this fluctuation, some of which are directly related to the
[161] in-migration of Ibans to Sibu. First, the fluctuation is related with an increase in population and a concept of limited goods. In Rumah Nyala,

18:Sutlive E,M-5 (1957-1971) 1973 OC6 Iban OC6
Sibu

582 829 Commenting on the high incidence of marriages outside the longhouse, several Ibans expressed a reticence to marry a member of one's own community because of over-familiarity.

[836] "You may court (ngayap)[15] a girl from your home community and sleep with her without having any intention of marrying her."

[184] That all Ibans do not share this opinion is apparent in the marriages that do take place between members of the same longhouse, but these are notably a minority.

584 183 The cultural prescription among adults of the senior generation, i.e., 40 years old and above, for parent-arranged marriages had virtually no support among young adults who prefer to find their own spouses. Through discussion with members of the senior generation, I ascertained that while they now subscribe to this norm, in fact few of them married (di-ator) according to arrangements made by their parents. In Rumah Nyala, only Linang and Julan (Bilik No. 21) were "arranged by their parents" (di-ator apai indai).

584 More commonly, marriages are arranged according to the choices of young people (sabong mata, a match (by the) eyes). A young man will see a girl to whom he takes a fancy and pay her a call. Entering her mosquito-net, he takes hold of her toe to announce his presence. They

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[15] For a discussion of traditional courting patterns and changes that are occurring in them as related to changes in residential patterns see Paul Beavitt, "Ngayap," SMJ, Vol. XV, Nos. 30-31, pp. 407-413. December, 1967.

593 effect upon Iban young people, so that they disdain life in the longhouse
166 and, if at all possible, take up urban domicile.[4] "Just so they have cash
369 in the pocket," complained one irate parent, "they don't want to leave the
56 [177] pasar." One young man said in his defense.

> "Our parents don't understand that for us there is no future in the longhouse. You can't get anywhere farming, and there are too many demands upon you to allow you to accumulate anything. The whole longhouse system is cut through with local jealousies."

561 Members of the senior generation criticize young people who, to
829 them, aimlessly wander the pasar in search of work.

> "They form gangs, Api' Bayat, and work as con men. Young men work as pimps (beroka) and young girls as prostitutes."

Several older adult residents of Sibu pasar used the expression of the young people who have come to the town, Sida' idup di puchok tunggul ("They live at the end of the stump").

855 In analyzing the relationships and behavior of parents and children,
593 these must be seen in the perspective of the larger society which long has
[183] valued the independence of the individual and his achievements. Of necessity brought about by the absence of parents during the day-time, children learn to fend for themselves and their siblings at an early age.

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[57] [4] A senior government official observed that while development policies encourage the return of young people to rural areas, there are few incentives to attract them in the longhouse community.

In addition to his orientation to independence, the Iban also has inculcated the cultural norm of achievement. We have described the important status of the pioneer and the benefits of his achievements which accured to his descendants. The institution of pejalai has required that young men prove their manhood by travel, overcoming difficulties, and returning with trophies: formerly human heads, now sewing machines, gold, outboard motors, and cash. A man is not a man until he has achieved some success through travel.

Thus, while Iban parents may lament and despair over their willful children, "the child is father to the man," and Iban children are ordering their conduct according to the patterns of behavior, with emphases upon independence, individualism and achievement, which they have learned from infancy. And to each, in turn, his time will come.

2. Siblings and Cousins

The Iban have a Kordofanian or undifferentiated type of sibling terminology (Murdock 1968). No distinction is made according to age or sex, and both brothers and sisters are called by the term menyadi' shortened in speech to nadi'). There is no segragation of siblings in late childhood, the incest taboo being so thoroughly inculcated in the socialization process that incest between siblings is an unthinkable and abhorrent idea.

Cousins are distinguished from siblings terminologically, but no distinction is made between cross-cousins and parellel cousins. The

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"(According to traditional Iban views) the person who lives alone is Antu Uging-an evil spirit - for he is different, a deviant from other Ibans, else why would he want to live alone. He doesn't share in the life of the longhouse, he doesn't participate in the daily round of activities, and he doesn't accept responsibility for teaching our ways to the younger generation.

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"The Tusun Tunggu Iban ("List of Iban Fines") states specifically that Ibans shall reside in longhouses. But many people no longer pay attention to these laws. For example, the people on Oya Road have no leaders - they have tuai, but these are tuai in name only. Daily they are in the pasar, selling land, acting as representatives for Chinese who want to get native land. And, some of them have built individual dwellings and no longer live in the longhouse."

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One of the tuai rumah referred to in the interview is Tuai Rumah Nyambang, head of a community of sixteen families. Through the sale of some of his land and the acquisition of a timber permit on behalf of a logging company, Nyambang has been able to build a relatively large separate house for his family, at a cost of M$6,700. The house is built of planed boards, elevated ten feet above a smooth concrete floor. The outside is painted a light blue, the floors polished and the ceiling finished with asbestos sheets. The kitchen includes a tiled Chinese-style stove eight feet long and three feet wide, constructed to burn wood. Nyambang is comfortably ensconced with his two wives, who are sisters, and his children in this new house.

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When questioned about the proper place for Ibans to reside, Nyambang, also, insists that the longhouse is the place. Concerning his

621 602 [563] through marriage or by construction of their own unit.[16]

Conversely, there is an equal ease of detachment of the individual 621 or family from a longhouse. We have discussed how Noel could return to his natal bilik or leave it depending upon the circumstances in which he found himself. A further extension of this ease of detachment occurs when individual families remove from a longhouse either to attach one another longhouse or to build an individual dwelling. Although gaps in a longhouse structure caused by the removal of a family to another area are not common, [681] still they do occur. By the payment of a token fine of M$30 to each family on either side, a family may remove its section of the longhouse. More often a family will move away, leaving its section of the longhouse standing, with the intention of returning or not returning to it in the future. In such instances no fine is required of the family.

[592] To summarize, in Freeman's words,

> "the fundamental nature of the Iban longhouse community. . . is a free and conditional association of corporate family groups. In other words, being part of a long-house does not deprive a bilek-family of its essential autonomy. In Iban social organization, there is no principle of more vital consequence."

621 342 198 C. Longhouse Fragmentation and Individual Dwellings

During the past decade, ten[17] of the longhouses in the 37 in which

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[183] [574] [16] Iban adat chara (law and custom) prescribes that all guests be accepted, and Iban mythology is replete with stories, with positive and negative connotations, of persons entertaining angels and unaware.

[17] Rumah Imba. Nyelang, Tindit, Pengulu Meringgai, Nyambang, Bujing, Pengulu Poh, Buda, Bandang, Luat.

621 342 198 491 Another factor which has influenced the withdrawal of some members from longhouses has been the construction of the road system, vastly improving communications between Sibu and the hinterland. For example, long before the other members of Rumah Pengulu Meringgai had left the old house, Nyanggau, an ambitious and enterprising young man had moved his family to a roadside site. Similarly, Entili of Rumah Tindit declined to build onto the new house, preferring to construct his residence along the Oya Road.

621 342 198 753 Still another reason which has prompted the breakup of longhouses, though none in this study's sample, has been the belief that a house has become "hot." For instance, in one house in the Kapit District, three members died between January and August, and the residents firmly believed that there was an antu living beneath the house and causing the deaths. When a fourth person died in September, the house was abandoned (rumah bumbus) and the people lived in hastily-erected huts until they could consider and undertake the erection of a new longhouse.

621 342 198 183 Although there is an increase in the number of individual houses which have been built in rural areas by former residents of longhouses,[18] there definitely is no mass abandonment of the longhouse system in favor of separate dwellings. To many Ibans, the young especially, the longhouse system represents a survival of a time past and one that has little meaning or use in

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[18] The 1970 pre-census data list 56 individual Iban dwellings, but this is very low, not taking into account the separation of units in Pasai, or the various tuai rumah, such as Janggu and Ringkai of Assan or Nyambang of Oya Road who have built individual houses. A more accurate figure would be between two- and three-hundred.

621 342 178 183 contemporary society. To others, and still the majority of Ibans, the longhouse system is the jalai pengidup ("way of life") that is most meaningful culturally. The longhouse still is an important center for social events and many persons stated their preference for the crowd and sounds of the longhouse rather than for the loneliness and silence of a separate house. [796] Further, the longhouse is a ceremonial center for the various gavai, to which even the newly emerging urban elite, among them some college graduates, [476] return and take part. The mutual aid provided for the events of moment in the life-cycle of the individual has been adduced as another reason for the continuing popularity of the longhouse. And finally, the longhouse continues to provide an aura of security, in reality little, during the present period of terrorist activities.

Thus, the number of people who have left the longhouse community and built individual dwellings in rural areas is still relatively small and dependent upon those factors discussed as well as idio-syncratic reasons.

H. Urban Residence

369 177 361 [162] The movement of an estimated 3,000 Ibans into the Sibu urban area has resulted in their dispersion throughout the town and in several patterns of residence. These patterns of residence are related to a number of factors, including the presence or absence of kinsmen, length of time and purpose for coming to the town, position and income and whether quarters are furnished by the employer.

undoing of group interests.

In this chapter we shall analyze certain aspects of Iban culture, as a system of practices, values and beliefs, which is shared among members of the society. There are some aspects of Iban culture which are shared by majority of the members, but there are dissimilarities as well in some norms, ideals and goals of the Ibans who have moved into the pasar and those who have remained in their rural communities. Iban culture has been affected through the contact of its practitioners with the cultures of other groups and through the mediating influences of the urban center. The analysis in this chapter aims to indicate those areas in which Iban culture is being affected most, and those aspects that are most resistant to other influences.

A. Self-Sufficiency

In Chapter Five, we described the importance of independence and the early training and orientation which Iban children receive in enculturation of this value. Independence-training, however, is but a single facet of a larger value which we may term self-sufficiency that includes a number of other ideals.

Through the process of enculturation, the Iban introjects the demands of his elders and peers that he be adequate to all of the demands of his roles as farmer, adventurer and community member. By word and example, boys and young men are taught the skills and courage required of them to be fully productive and participating members of society. Similarly, girls

867 and young women are taught that their roles in farm, garden and bilik require skill and resourcefulness in providing for their families.

243 554 183 We have described the importance which the Iban attaches to successful farming. The sine qua non for upward social mobility has been until recently continuous success in padi-farming.[1] It is in this area as in no other that the blessings of the gods appears, and men who are successful farmers and know a relative degree of prosperity (betuah-limpah, "with good luck") are invited to pronounce blessings at the gawai, that some of their benefits may spread to others. On the other hand, in traditional Iban culture, though a man might be skilled in other areas such as augury, shamanism or even warfare, if the gods of fortune didn't bless his farm, his ambitions for upper-class recognition foundered.

One member of the newly emerging entrepreneurial class of Ibans, a hard-working and ambitious man, said that the foundations of his success were securely laid.

> "My family has never known a year when we were short or rice (maya bulan gantong sendok). This is the reason why I have been able to get ahead and stay ahead of the rest of the people in my community: I haven't had to spend money on rice. And other members of the community work for me in my rubber and pepper gardens, in exchange for a gantang (5-1/3 pounds of husked rice."

[437]

22 183 The Iban is expected to show skills in the other tasks performed in making a living, such as fishing, gathering, hunting and acquisition of those things commonly needed.

[178] [1] Higher education and employment now offer viable alternatives.

000 those things commonly needed. For example, one of the skills that is
868 expected of all young men is proficiency in the use of knife and axe.
412 Iban children begin to handle knives at age three or four so that, by late childhood, they are able to perform the multiplicity of tasks with the use of a knife. Similarly, they must learn to use the axe for felling trees and chopping firewood. Commenting on his refusal to return to his long-house during school holidays, a secondary school boy said,

> "I have been away from my house at school since age nine. When I went back one time, my parents asked me to chop firewood. When I tried, the girls laughed at me because I didn't know how. I'll never go back again, except for a day or two."

867 Enculturation occurs not only by example but also by word, and
538 aphorisms, proverbs and myths abound to impress upon the Iban his culture's
539 grammar of values. Success in farming is considered in part due to providence, but the Iban recognize that it requires an equal part of hard work, as expressed in the following proverb:

Satibang, dua tibang,	One rice bin, two rice bins,
Batu Kenyalang.	(Even) a hornbill stone.
Enti' enda' turun nyerang	If you don't go to attack
Enda' ga' numbang ka tiang,	you won't fell the post,
jangka lelaki.	perhaps you are a man.
Sapemansai dua pemansai,	One fish basket or two,
Batu Channai.	(Even) a magical whetstone.
Enti' enda' turun ka umai	If you don't go to your farm
Enda' ga' bulih padi.	You won't get rice.

• 183 In summary, one basic aspect of this most fundamental value of
243 self-sufficiency is the ability to get enough padi so that other bilik-
868 families won't have to provide this basic food. Accompanying this is an

emphasis upon development of those skills and knowledge which enable males and females to perform productively in the family and community. The family whose members are successful in the food quest enjoys a reputation and respect not accorded to those who, through misfortune, ineptness or indolence, never have enough rice and other food. Similarly, longhouse communities which maintain a relatively high degree of self-sufficiency in food are more respected than those in annual want. Thus, in discussing those houses that had been provided rice by the Social Welfare Department, Ambas anak Irang of Rumah Nyala said,

> "We at Aup haven't applied for rice in the past, and though our tuai rumah has asked for it this year because some of the families are out of rice, I told my wife not to put our names in - I refuse to sell my name for rice (aku enggai nyual nama diri' ngulih ka berau)."[2]

There is a tendency for casual observers to lump entire communities together and to deal in stereotypes.[3] Yet, within every longhouse community there are differences in abilities and persistence that are revealed in this

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[2]Subsequent to Ambas' statement, Tuai Rumah Nyala obtained rice from Welfare for members of his house. Of this Ambas said, "We didn't ask for it, but if it's for the house, then we will get our share. For, this is like being in a longboat together: if all row you go ahead, but if you sink, you go down together."

[3]There is a certain amount of truth in such stereotypes, and some communities are richer, others poorer. But within the same community, almost always there are disparate degrees of prosperity.

18:Sutlive E,M-5 (1957-1971) 1973 OC6 Iban OC6
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basic value of self-sufficiency that emerge in discussions and the respect paid to individual members of the community. Some may possess the tongues of angels, with facile expressions and convincing speech, but unless words are backed by performance, a credibility gap quickly develops. On the other hand, a quiet, unassuming man or woman, who farms well, develops his gardens, and knows how to manage his affairs and persist towards his goals, will achieve respect and considerable influence among his fellows. In their evaluations, the Iban can be cruel critics of failure, but they are covetous respecters of success.

In Chapter Two we discussed the importance attached to the role of the pioneer, who overcame climate, jungle and, sometimes, enemies, to open up new land for his descendants and others. The adventure of pejalai has been, among other things, a pioneering experience for young men into new areas and among new people. Today, the pejalai may be by plane or launch to the Shell oilfields of Brunei or the forests of Sabah or Pontianak, but adventure and travel still are prescribed as part of the lessons for self-sufficiency.

To a very uncertain extent, the popular myths[4] of Keling, the god of adventure and warfare, are a recapitulation of the story of the Iban.

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[4] In addition to story-telling (berenoera) on the longhouse ruai, numerous books about Keling and his female counterpart, Kumang, have been published by the Borneo Literature Bureau and the myths sometimes are broadcast on the Iban service of Radio Malaysia. Small wonder that my nine-year old son was accused of blasphemy when he suggested to an Iban playmate the possibility that Keling wasn't for real.

The personal characteristics attributed to Keling are those ideals of the Iban male. It is my opinion that, as no other character in Iban folklore, Keling is the collective representation of the masculine ego-ideal. Every young Iban boy knows of Keling, who is aggressive, proud, resourceful, brave, independent, and the bearer of tremendous personal magic. His travels number as many as his story-tellers. Always in quest of adventure, he makes his way through difficult jungles, over flooded rivers, conquering human enemies and defeating the worst of evil spirits (antu). He recapitulates Iban history. He represents what every red-blooded Iban male should be.

Keling is never in want, his farms never fail. His accoutrements are the finest, his magic is all-powerful. Keling allows no obstacle to stand in his way. In one story, he fights and dispatches a dozen different antu, hosts of traditional enemies, and finally the entire army of the Rajah Laut (Malay King) in order to recover Kumang, his consort, who had been spirited away. The story encapsulates much of the history of the Iban and the hostilities which have marked their relations with other ethnic groups over competition for land. Interspersed with other groups, competing in an environment in which subsistence has demanded individual and corporate resourcefullness and resiliency, the survival and increase of the Iban have produced the Keling myths and have depended on the inculcation of Keling-like traits in the lives of members.

That some men do not achieve the ideal of self-sufficiency scarcely needs stating. We have seen that less than one-half of the bilik-families

We have seen that less than one half the bilik-families have enough rice to last them from one harvest until the next, and must supplement their own production with sago, rice purchased from the sale of produce or from wages, or grants from the Welfare Department. Again, not all men show the aggressive drives manifest in Kaling, and personality types ranges from the strong, dominant male who is quite self-assured, to the manang bali', the transvestite who, with confused sex-role identity, escapes unbearable conflict through assumption of the healer's role.[5]

The ideal of self-sufficiency, with strong emphases upon independence, skill, courage, persistence and adventure, has been the norm by which individual performances have been measured. Consequently, while Iban society may in one sense be described as egalitarian, as we will discuss in the next section of this chapter, it also is highly competitive, and from the early history of Iban predations until the present, many members strive to get ahead of their fellows.

Judged by the scale of self-sufficiency, traditional Iban society was divided into three classes. At the highest level were those members who were able to farm successfully, achieving thereby an independence from others and a reputation for good standing with the gods. If a fortuitous

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[5] The Iban shaman or manang does not seek acts of bravery (ukai nuju pemerani), yet, in an interesting bit of irony, after his ordination, (bebangun) it is he who enjoins in battle the fears of other members of Iban society as projected in antu and incubus (buyu').

567 727 to test the mettle of the ulun berani. For, unlike the former type of slave, the slave of bravery could be redeemed and adopted as a blood-brother, if judged worthy by observation of his conduct and character.[6]

178 436 [183] The basic value of self-sufficiency and its sub-categories, together with the concomitant division of Iban society into three classes based upon success or failure to attain the ideal, has been pre-adaptive for the Iban's participation in a cash economy and entrance into economic [175] classes recognizable in this pluralistic society. By the end of the second decade of this century, many Ibans in the Sibu District had become money-wise and were aware of the goods money could buy, as well as the security it offered. In his quarterly report, the Resident for the Lower Rejang described the Iban's hoarding of copper coinage (SG No. 767, 16 April, 1919). As early as 1902, the Iban of the Rejang were buying "old Busa jars" (SG No. 437, 2 June, 1902 p. 125), for amounts ranging from [411] $100 to $200. The introduction of shotguns resulted in their purchase by thousands of Iban,[7] so that it now is exceptional for a family not to [556] have at least one shotgun. Jars, different types of brassware such as gongs, pinang containers, condiment trays and lamps, as well as shotguns,

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[6] In a ritual of redemption (tembang or tebus), the slave was freed and his new status declared. At the same time he was given gifts, symbolizing his beginning a new life and relationship to other members of the community.

[7] In the store under the Sibu District Office, thousands of shotgun registration forms are stored.

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871 because of two reasons. First, the Brookes were afraid that the Iban
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175 would lose their traditional culture. Secondly, they were afraid that
829 educated Ibans would be dangerous Ibans, i.e., unwilling to accept without question the paternalistic Brooke administration which was weighted heavily against their advance through its stereotyping of their culture, as well as being heavily pro-Malay.

175 The cession of Sarawak to the British Government in 1946 resulted
658 in a more open and equitable arrangement for the Ibans. They were permitted access to higher education, and a large number of Local Authority Schools
[369] were built. Whereas previously only a small handful of Ibans lived in Sibu prior to the cession, by 1947 their number was 259 and by 1960, almost 700.

178 Thus, education and wage-earning offered viable alternatives to the
871 traditional value of self-sufficiency and status according to rice production.
464 Education, at first even at a Primary 4 or 6 level, later at higher standards,
[183] permitted the student to find employment in a number of jobs, ranging from primary school teachers to clerks in Government and companies, and even to attain to senior government positions.

[171] > "To become a government employee. . .has meant many things: social status (and the titles and uniforms to match), economic security, a comfortable life with relatively modern conveniences, and, essentially, identification with a Western (rather than a native) style of life."

The initial skepticism of many Iban parents about education was overcome by reports of the employment opportunities available to students.

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178 Of what account were their arguments that their ancestors didn't go to
871 school and yet knew how to grow rice,[9] when confronted with the economic
464 potentials through education? It is small wonder that parents asked for schools for a new formula for success had been comprehended. As one astute Iban put it,

[829] "We quickly discovered that education is money and money is padi, so why cling to one way (i.e., farming) only."

The proliferation of schools in part due to Government's desire, in part due to parental demands, and the accompanying expectations for employment of school-leavers, is a crucial factor in the transition from an ideal of self-sufficiency in rice to one of security through education and wage-earning. Without imputing blame, the initial and early raison d'etre of schools in Sarawak was for training teachers and civil servants. Such was the shortage of educated Sarawakians that even as late as the mid-1950's, achievement of a Primary 4 or 6 education was tantamount to automatic employment. It took several years for this model to be comprehended by many Ibans, but once grasped it has been firmly held.

178 Education, thus, has been a process of disorientation to rural life
871 and orientation to a salaried position, hopefully in an urban area such as
464 Sibu or Kuching. There is little inclination for more highly educated
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[9] An argument that I heard on a dozen or more occasions in the late 1950's when discussions about the establishment of schools took place in some more remote upriver areas.

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198 students to return to the longhouse, and as we have mentioned, for most young, 871 educated Ibans there is the feeling that the traditional value of self- 464 sufficiency cannot be realized through padi-farming, but rather through 183 cash-employment. In light of this attitude, it is likely that an increasing number of young Ibans will move into this pasar, and that Government's urging of its "back-to-the-farm" policy is futile.

178 Education and employment are relatively new developments among the Iban, particularly employment on a steady salaried basis.[10] Several re- [572] sults are appearing. First, although kin-ties remain important to Iban mobility, a fraternity of school-mates is also appearing. In listing the person who helped them get employment and find a place to live in Sibu, almost one-quarter (or about 67) of a random sample of 200 indicated a [829] former school-mate (Table 35). Second, among some educated Iban, there is a tendency to disparage their people's traditional culture and to abhor [177] life in the longhouse. Third, there is a tendency for young educated Ibans to identify with the values of other ethnic groups, whose members they emulate whenever possible. We will discuss this later in the chapter when [554] we consider acculturation. Fourth, there is appearing a hierarchy of statuses, in some cases following the traditional class structure of the Iban, in others based upon level of education, type of work, amount of salary and political clout.

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[10] Iban men have gone on pejalai for more than three-quarters of a century, but work on a regular salaried basis is a new feature.

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183 178 554 [619] The Iban have had no tradition of political unity, and divisions long have existed between those who were able to achieve to the value of self-sufficiency, and those who were not. At present, these divisions are being re-interpreted through a translation of the value in terms of education and cash-employment. Fifteen years ago, Richards, a long-time colonial officer and student of the Ibans wrote that,

> "there is now perhaps some risk of a division among the Ibans themselves. . . . There is already a gulf between the rich and the poor, between the Iban who is educated and owns property in plantations and the one who is not educated in the modern sense and has only traditional property. The division and eventual disruption of the community to which I referred earlier will, if it occurs, leave the Ibans weak and defenseless as a community, and lead to their disappearance in the way of the people who preceded them in this country."

The divisions among the Ibans about which Richards wrote are not new phenomena. Rather, they have existed as a part of Iban society and culture for as long as traditional accounts provide us knowledge. The entrance of Ibans into modern society and pasar life with the concomitant alignment with economic classes of other ethnic groups is but a new expression of an old fact. For, according to the value of self-sufficiency, members of the society long have been ranked according to their performances and achievements.

B. Cooperation and Competition

183 496 Closely related to the first value of self-sufficiency are the two norms of cooperation and competition. Given the habitat to which the Ibans

18:Sutlive E,M-5 (1957-1971) 1973 OC6 Iban OC6 Sibu

183 496 have adapted, together with the techniques of acquisition and production which they have developed, the norms of cooperation and competition have been important in maintenance of group solidarity and survival through emphases upon activities such as sharing and personal initiative. The disparate nature of these two norms and the rewards which members of Iban society perceive in each has resulted in different responses and behavior patterns as individuals have attempted to accomodate to one or the other, or to hold the two in tension.

183 496 621 Although first impressions of visitors to longhouse communities is of a cooperating group, each community is also composed of a number of competitors, vying through various activities to exceed or at least not to [156] be bested by their fellows. Traditional emphases upon physical prowess, bravery and cunning among men, and hard work and domestic skills among women have been major themes among the strongly achievement-oriented Ibans. Cooperation is needed in house-building, rice cultivation, the establishment of schools, and putting on gawai. But competition cuts through all of these activities and others as people make comparisons of the size of houses, yields of the rice-field, examination results, and how many more people came to their gawai. Kami Iban enggai alah ari pangan ("We Iban refuse to be defeated by one another"), said Apai Gaun of Rumah Nyala on one occasion. This refusal is manifest in the intensely competitive spirit and activities of individuals, kin-groups and longhouse communities.

627 ascertain the truth between two litigants. In two reported cases (SG 1227, 31 May, 1960:108-9), opponents settled a trial by cockfight. In much more demanding ordeals, two men in one of the houses surveyed underwent trial by submersion (selam ka ai') to settle a boundary dispute, the loser being the man who first fainted or emerged from the water. In another ordeal held in 1970 (and unreported), two men plunged their arms into a cauldron of hot water to seize stones (chelok betong) from the bottom, the man whose arm was unmarked being considered the party in the right.

621 [183] [195] Iban speech is thoroughly seasoned with expressions emphasizing the norms of cooperation and competition. While we must stress the autonomy of the bilik-family, yet in matters concerning the entire community the autonomy must be subjugated to the group decision. After the decision has been made through the community discussion (randau orang mayoh), [539] members are expected to accept and follow it. To betray the community is analogous to the story of the river fish (juak) which, having completed a non-aggression pact with the crane (ensulit) slyly bit off the leg of the ensulit when it came to the water to drink; hence, the expression used of betrayal of an agreement or community decision, aum juak.

621 183 Community solidarity and cooperation is to be valued more than success, according to the following proverbs:

[539]

Parai manok, anang bekutok.	The chicken has died, don't criticize.
Patah taji, anang bekelai,	The spur has broken, don't mark it.
Patah duku', anang bejako'.	The knife broke, don't say anything.
Patah lungga', anang belaya.	The short knife broke, don't argue about it.

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621 Occasions when a member does set himself up in judg-ment on the community, criticizing the results of some community decision, other members may politely but firmly reprove him, reminding him that the group is more important than the individual, good-will than gain. If he doesn't accept their reproof, members may cite any number of proverbs to the effect that he is more stupid than the group by setting himself over against it. For example,

[539]

Ko de, Malau jugau, ia isau pandak putin	You say that Malau is stupid is stupid and short-sighted;
Ko de, aku lungau, ia de ke nadai runding.	You say that I am foolish, but it is you who are senseless.
De ngumbai diri Keling Panggau,	You call yourself the Keling of "heaven" (Panggau),
Tang de Keling Sebayan.	But you are the Keling of the dead (Sebayan).

539 In speech, as well as in all other aspects of Iban life, coopera-
183 tion and competition are both culturally and socially normative. Numerous stories are told of Apai Salui ("Father of Foolishness") as examples of the misfortunes that befall the person who does not cooperate, who is indecisive, or who does not jealously guard what is valuable. When Apai Salui catches and eats a turtle without sharing with his wife, Chelegit, she sees the particles of food between his teeth, extracts them while he naps, and feeds them to Apai Salui for dinner. When gawai are given at houses upriver and downriver, Apai Salui paddles first in one direction, then in the other, reaching each house only after the food has been exhausted.

539 In a story with obvious inter-ethnic connotations, Apai Salui had
183 a large concrete house, all the money he needed, Chinese jars, Malay gongs, and bins of rice. His Malay friend, Suma Unang, had nothing - except a bamboo hut with a split bamboo floor, nipa thatched walls and roof. But one of the poles under Suma Unang's house was split and when the wind blew through it, the sound was like that of a flute. One day, Apai Salui heard the sound and decided that he must have Suma Unang's house so that he could listen to the wind blowing over the split pole.

The two men exchanged houses. After Apai Salui moved into Suma Unang's hut, he sat underneath it listening to the sound. One day, however, the wind was stronger than usual, and the pole gave away, the house collapsed and Apai Salui was killed. But Suma Unang lived comfortably in his house with money, jars, gongs and rice.

C. Egalitarianism

183 Precisely because there are some Ibans who are more capable and self-sufficient than others, who are keener competitors and whose achievements outstrip those of others, there is a strong traditional emphasis upon egalitarianism. By egalitarianism I mean the myths and rituals prescribed to support the ideal of equality of one's self vis-a-vis others, the right to make one's own decision, to speak one's mind, to follow one's own course of action. As with the preceding norms, this ideal subsumes a number of other values such as justice and fair treatment, respect and consideration.

183 626 As important as this norm is considered to be in maintaining the independence and rights of the individual and the autonomy of the bilik-family, it is equally important in maintaining cohesiveness within the community. For, by techniques subtle and unsubtle, individuals are "kept in check," lest they too far outstrip the group. The levelling processes at work in the longhouse community are among the most important pressures for conformity upon the individual member. Thus, because there are problems of inequality there is much concern about egalitarianism.

593 578 Food-sharing is a basic characteristic of the bilik-family but conflicts often arise over the use of other goods which are acquired by members of the family. Persons may be reluctant to contribute towards the purchase of furniture and other goods for their natal bilik if they do not anticipate inheriting the things purchased, or if they are intending to move out and begin their own bilik. We have seen that conflict of interests between structurally parallel units within the same bilik has been a major cause of bilik-partition. Even within the same nuclear family, [765] there is a high degree of independence. Men who earn wages may spend their money on cockfighting with little or no interference from their spouses or other members of the family. Should a wife or other family member reprimand or even question the cockfighter about the use of his money in that way, the latter will resent and almost surely reject whatever is said to him. The money is his own, and no one else has the right to tell him what to do with it.

577 Similarly, in inter-bilik affairs, the Iban soon learns that to intrude into or interfere with the affairs of another family is to invite trouble. "He wants to be more than others" (ia ka' belebih ka diri') or "he wants to make himself great" (ia ka' ngemesai ka diri') are common 539 criticisms of persons who may offer advice or criticism. In a popular child's story, Iko' Kera' ("The Macaque's Tail"), a group of macaques descended upon a fallen tree trunk which a man had been splitting before returning home for his lunch. One macaque was more mischievous that the others, shaking the wedge until finally it popped loose and his tail was caught in the split of the trunk. The man quickly dispatched the macaque, and such is the end of everyone who interferes with the work of others, concludes the moralistic story.

577 Through example as well as lore, the Iban finds that it is safest to do his work and let others do theirs, offering no direct suggestions lest he suffer disfavor for impugning the abilities of others. "He knows more than others" (ia nemu agi' ari orang) is a stinging and humbling remark which pulls most persons into line with the practice of non-interference.

• 183 539 Equality is an important part of myth and ritual, and many proverbs are derived from lore and legend to emphasize the norm. The following sayings all are related to egalitarianism, justice and fair treatment.

Baka adat para sagantang	Let the law be equal for all, just as a gantang measure is the same for everyone.
Anang menibong bepinang	Don't ask some to climb the thorn tree, others to climb the smooth betel tree.

183 539 Pedua' badak, mit kelikit, besai kelikai.[14] Like the division of the tapir, much to the big little to the small.

861 156 576 The Iban rightly are described as individualists, but within the constraints of society and culture. Thus, the individual learns to maintain a balance between acts and speech that are self-effacing and face-saving, personally satisfying and socially acceptable. Children are taught to walk over the ruai so that they do not make unnecessary noise which is considered disrespectful to others. Passing before others, the Iban bows with fingertips down between his knees to show his humility and [516] not give offense. Women learn to sit on their heels (dudok pipi'), men in other prescribed ways according to the relative ranks of members in the group in which they find themselves.[15] Guests always must be seated along the outer wall of the padong ruai and the good host must offer his guests cigarettes or the betel container.

537 156 When called upon to speak, as at a gawai, the Iban must hedge his words by apologizing for his inability to speak, second for anything wrong that he may say. Having spoken thus, he proceeds to demonstrate that he is

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[14] See "The Animals Go Fishing," Appendix B.

[15] Positions when sitting are prescribed according to the ages and ranks of members in the group. To sit with feet outstretched towards elders or towards food at a meal is considered ill-mannered. To sit with one knee bent and the arm resting "cockily" on it is brash.

537 as facile as others in speaking. On the occasion of one gawai, I heard
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[539] one speaker begin with the following words:

Aku tu' nadai utai temu.	I don't know anything.
Tang, baka semalau	But as the warbler carries
nampong lachau,	on from the lizard,
Baka tawak nampong begau.	As the gong continues the beat
	(so I repeat what I have heard).

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[183] Emphasis upon egalitarianism, the conflicts of interests between individuals and the community, the tensions between cooperative and competitive activities, are related to and re-inforced by the important [626] group of beings known as antu. In the absence of social sanctions which can be enforced, and in the situation in which men do what pleases them, belief in antu serves a teleological function which is,

> "crucial to the psycho-biological functioning of the individual, and to the survival of (Iban) society and its culture."

In contrast to the beneficient Iban gods, the antu are all conceived of as evil and dangerous. Their birth probably is the matrix of hostilities, stresses and anti-social tendencies with which all people [784] have to deal in one way or another. Among the Ibans, these problems have been reified and personalized in the antu who give supernatural sanctions to the scores of pemali ("ritual prohibitions"), providing restraints against anti-social behavior and constraint for socially-approved behavior.

The belief of the Ibans in antu serves the function of displacing their hostilities upon the antu, whereas if the true origins of the antu

make the children respect the real antu and not violate the pemali.

Through introjection of belief in the antu, the individual accepts as part of his behavioral environment those agents who stand behind the pemali. Belief in the antu still is virtually universal among the Iban, as is the belief that anything can become an antu.[18] Consequently, all things as well as persons should be treated with respect, lest they be offended and seek revenge.

"Nothing happens without a cause" (nadai utai nyadi ngapa'), commented Pengulu Nuing Kudi to me on one occasion. And in the absence of germ theory, most illnesses are attributed to antu.[19] When sickness befalls a member of a community and the manang ("shaman") is called in for treatment, the entire longhouse community is liable to prohibitions on travel so that they are restricted one and all to the house for from one to three days. One person's having a bad dream or hearing an omen bird may result in similar restrictions. Through a uniform response to illnesses and omens, members of the same community equally are affected by one another's situations.

The emphasis upon egalitarianism for reinforcement of group solidarity is perceived differently by many Ibans, especially young people

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[18] Several students of mine have recounted how old jars (tajau) which long had been neglected became antu, moaning over their lack of attention. After offerings (piring) were made to them, the jars behaved as jars should.

[19] Pansa' utai ("passed by something") and kena' sangkoh antu ("speared by a spirit") are most common phrases ascribing illnesses to antu.

183 626 and those for whom the norm of competition and achievement take precedence over cooperation and solidarity. Discussing the factors involved in his movement into Sibu, one man stated that in the longhouse he felt no opportunity to get ahead.

[829] "If you are able to accumulate something, you are expected to give a gawai. If someone has a dream, you have to lose work because of him. If anyone gets sick or their stock gets some disease, others are apt to be infected. If I ever go back to the rural area, I'm going to build myself a separate house where I won't be kept back on a level with everyone else."

626 556 441 The levelling process which functions to maintain some degree of relative equality among members of the same community has frustrated the atttempts of some Ibans to achieve upward mobility in their home communities. In a recent case with which I am familiar, a young man was given a small grant of cash and goods by the Development Office to open a shophouse. After three years of industrious trading, he had build up his business and had about M$3,000 on savings. When the Development Officer went to the longhouse being served by and serving the shophouse, the tuai rumah and many of the tuai bilik demanded that the shop be closed. Surprised, the officer asked why, and was told that they refused to be taken advantage (enggai di-empa', literally, "refuse to be eaten") by the trader. The officer pointed out that the shop was the only one in the area, and that the profit which the trader had realized was reasonable. But the tuai of the community were adamant: the trader could not build himself up at their expense.

183 Egalitarianism is an important traditional norm according to which all Ibans supposedly are equal. Twelve years ago I heard the paramount chief of the Ibans, Temenggong Jugah anak Barieng, bemoan the way in which he and other Iban leaders were same as other members of their society.

[829] "The chiefs of the Kenyah and Kayan sit in their boats and their anembiak paddle for them. We Iban chiefs must paddle along with our people."

[178] These days are past for the Dato Tan Sri Temenggong Jugah, Federal Minister for Sarawak Affairs. He and other Iban ministers no longer paddle; they are given police escorts with sirens open.

183 178 Although the value of egalitarianism still is held by a large portion of Iban society, more mobile and ambitious members are disinclined to subscribe to it. If possible, as with the emerging entrepreneurs in each community, they will exceed their fellows while remaining a part of the [166] longhouse. But in situations where this proves impossible and where the egalitarian demands of the community frustrate individual ambitions, movement into Sibu or some other part of Sarawak, Brunei or Sabah is likely [829] to occur. Many young educated Ibans have expressed the feeling that there is no future for them in the longhouse. Their presence by hundreds in Sibu is in part an attempt to achieve upward mobility and greater economic rewards for themselves than are possible in the traditional longhouse situation.

D. Mobility and Opportunism

183 Related to the strong achievement orientation of the Ibans are two other closely associated values, mobility and opportunism. Mobility includes not only the traditional physical shifts of residence related to rice cultivation, but also the transfer of relations among kinsmen and non-kinsmen and changes in cultural values as opportunities for greater exploitation occur. By opportunism I mean the readiness with which most members of the society seize any perceived opportunity for maximization of personal benefit, whether in wage-earning, education, Christianity or politics.

361 At the risk of redundancy I have stressed the high incidence of mobility among the Ibans. The quality of the soils and the practice of slash-and-burn cultivation made necessary their movements each five or six years as the land near their longhouses deteriorated and yields diminished. When distances to the farms became too great or numbers more than could be [178] supported, some members of the community moved to look for new land. This pattern changed only after the Ibans became more sedentary through the shift to wet-rice cultivation, the planting of rubber gardens, and in this District the immigration of thousands of Chinese who became competitors for land.

484 574 The Ibans long have been a people on the move in other ways as well. In addition to the often-mentioned institution of pejalai, visits between kinsmen and friends are made frequently, often as not over relatively great distances. With recent improvements in communications, the incidence of visits is even higher. While men have tended to be more mobile than women, the latter also pay visits, travel to other towns to

484 Upon the return of a man from a trip offerings of thanksgiving
782 were made. In 1971, when Minggu anak Janti of Rumah Nyala returned on leave from the Commandos, a special service called niat ("Good Luck") was observed at Bukit Aup. Sacrifices were made and special food prepared to give thanks for the safe return of Minggu after months away from home.

181 Mobility among the Ibans is not limited to physical movement but
602 includes also the flexibility which marks their social organization and culture. We have discussed the relative ease of attachment to and detachment from the bilik-family, and how the very vagueness of the boundaries of the kin-group, kaban, permits inclusion of members of other ethnic groups as well as other Ibans. Ibans who marry members of other groups still are included in their natal kin-group and looked to for hospitality and other
[597] help by their kinsmen. In the problematic area of land tenure and the law which prohibits Chinese owning land in the Native Area, several pengulu have adopted Chinese men as grandsons, thereby legitimizing land holdings of the Chinese in the Native Area.

177 The adoption of values and styles of other ethnic groups also is
[183] related to the cultural mobility of the Ibans, and even in remote longhouses
[353] it is not uncommon to find walls plastered with pictures from the "Asia
[291] Magazine" or American west coast newspapers.[21] Iban young men and women
[302] are sensitive to new styles (Iban, stail), and many young men are natty dressers with long hair, low-slung flair trousers and even simulated leather

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[21] These are shipped in large quantities to local shopkeepers and used for wrapping purchases.

152 The fear of shame or embarrassment (malu) is a powerful motivation among the Iban. One of the most serious offenses that can be perpertrated against an Iban is to embarrass him and similarly, embarrassing appearances
177 and situations are to be eschewed by all means possible. Thus, personal pride and a fear of shame is one factor which motivates many Ibans to
[535] identify with and emulate members of other groups and their fashions. In some communities the traditional styles of dance (ngajat) are passing, and in the evenings young people practice rumba, tuis ("twist") and konga ("conga").

[183] [152] While fear of ridicule and shame have contributed to the acculturation of some Ibans to the values of other groups, at the same time the possibility of rewards also has been a powerful factor. We have discussed the reasons behind the clamor for education and schools as a means to employment. We now will consider the entrance of thousands of Ibans into Christian churches as an example of the norms of mobility and opportunism under discussion.

175 797 Although the Roman Catholic Church has been established in the Third Division for more than a century, until recently its work has been limited primarily to the pasars and the growth of Iban constituents restricted accordingly. Despite the establishment of the Methodist Church in the Third Division by the first Foochow settlers, the entrance of Ibans into the Methodist Church began only after the Second World War. In 1949, a group of 32 Ibans, among them Tan Sri Temenggong Jugah, Pengarah Sibat anak Semada, and Pengulu Jinggut, three of the most powerful leaders in

the upper Rejang area, were baptized in Kapit. The first Ibans in the Sibu District to enter the Methodist Church were from Bawang Assan, where more than 250 were baptized on one day. During the past two decades, more than 16,000 Ibans of the Third Division, about 11,000 in the Sibu District and below, have masok Keristin ("become Christians").

The reasons why a majority of Ibans have joined the Methodist Church are illustrative of the importance of these two norms, for most of those who have become Christians are the more mobile[22] and have perceived opportunities for personal or group benefit through identification with the church. In discussing the reasons for the entrance of the large group from Bawang Assan, one of the community leaders said that,

> "following the Japanese War, we were suspected of having collaborated with the Japanese. We knew that the British were Christians, and we wanted to be identified with them. So, after much discussion, we agreed that we could clear our names and show our identity with the British by becoming Christians."

We have discussed how the Christian church is looked upon as a benevolent fraternalism, an extension of the Ibans' model of the kin-group. Thus, the church is looked to as an agency for help in time of need. More than a score of Ibans whom I asked about their reasons for becoming Christians replied to the effect that,

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[22] Among more conservative and traditional communities, there is little interest in and response to the work of Christian churches.

183 178 The Ibans are activists and with their orientation to achievement, the more determined ones work to make certain that good luck comes to them. Less reliance is placed upon ubat, pengaroh and engkerabun and more upon education of young people, contacts with kinsmen and friends for exploitation, and awareness of opportunities for obtaining Government grants and [654] employment. Recently, when the Agriculture Department announced that it would give aid to pepper planters, more than 2,800 Ibans made application [464] through the Sibu office.[29] When the Sibu Rural District Office advertised for one position of an office boy, 61 young men, most of the Iban, applied [462] for the job. The division of labor described in Chapter Four in which women do the main work on the farms and men supplement the family's income with wages is an increasing pattern among Ibans of this District to ensure good luck and a good life.

181 183 In summary, the culture of the Ibans has been one of the most important factors in their becoming the most aggressive of the indigenous peoples of Sarawak. Individualists and achievement - oriented through the processes of socialization and enculturation, the Ibans moved into the Rejang subduing, driving out or assimilating the other groups. Motivated by a grammar of values including self-sufficiency and class distinctions

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[29] Ironically, the grants are in the amount of M$ .05 per pepper vine. Most Ibans who make application must pay five dollars to a literate Chinese or Iban to complete the forms for them, and spend on an average of ten dollars in travel and meals, so the grants pay off only when made for more than 300 vines.

deriving therefrom; cooperation for the benefit of the group and competition for maximization of individual situations; the ideal of the equality of the self vis-a-vis others; the encouragement of mobility and opportunism through speech and example; and an activistic approach to obtaining good luck in their undertakings, many Ibans have found in their traditional culture values which have been pre-adaptive for their participation in modern society. Some have related to modern society through adjustments in behavioral patterns in rural areas. Others have entered the pasar, where despite numerous changes, they still have maintained their ethnic identity.

We now will consider the characteristics of those Ibans who have moved into the pasar, together with brief biographical accounts of four individuals who have been selected as being representative of those who retain their residence in the rural areas and commute daily to Sibu, and those who have moved into Sibu for work and study.

178 439 Until the last decade or so, the trading network was operated almost entirely by Malays and Chinese. Only they had the external contacts in Singapore, Malaya and Hong Kong to handle imports and exports. Within the past decade, however, Ibans have begun to supplant Chinese traders at the village level. For, more than jars and brassware moved [436] over the trading network. Through the exchange of goods Ibans have acquired an orientation to a cash economy and mercantile mentality, the better to obtain more goods and status.

183 198 [462] The tradtional value system placed a premium on performance in the areas of rice-cultivation and bravery, among men, and weaving skills among women. New values of money and salable materials provided new bases [464] [871] for differentiation between members of Iban society. Employment and education, available principally in urban areas, have eroded traditional values and radically affected Iban social structure.

175 657 167 Although the Ibans were related to the pasar through the trading network and administrative functions which increasingly impinged upon their lives, the Brooke government discouraged the movement of Ibans into the pasar for fear of changes in the traditional society and culture as they had conceptualized them. The Brookes and their officers conceived of themselves as protectors of an Iban ethos which they had stereotyped. The role of the Ibans was cast in terms of the military functions which they might perform and every attempt was made to preserve [871] this role. They were permitted to attend mission schools but there was no encouragement or support from the Brooke government for Iban education.